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I Like, Therefore I Am: Increasing Associations Between the Self and Blacks with Evaluative Training

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I LIKE, THEREFORE I AM: INCREASING ASSOCIATIONS BETWEEN THE SELF AND BLACKS WITH EVALUATIVE TRAINING

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Abstract

My research investigated the effectiveness of a prejudice reduction method in which participants are trained to associate positive or negative concepts with a target group. By training participants to associate positive concepts with a social group such as Blacks, this technique may be used to reduce participants' implicit prejudice toward that group (Olson & Fazio, 2006). I examined the effectiveness and limitations of an evaluative training technique by investigating how training in associating positive concepts with Blacks would influence identification and potential individual difference moderators of the impact of evaluative training on prejudice reduction and identification. Two hundred and eighty-four participants completed an evaluative training task, self-Black associations IAT, race IAT, and personality scales. Results demonstrated that participants who received training to associate positive concepts with Blacks had lower implicit prejudice. A mediational analysis found increases in self-association or identification with Blacks were caused by lower implicit prejudice. None of the individual difference moderators significantly moderated the effect of evaluative training on implicit prejudice or identification. Future studies should examine the strength of evaluative training in two important ways: 1) evaluative training's influence on behavior and 2) the endurance of evaluative training's resulting prejudice change and identification. Understanding its influence on behavior or long-term endurance of the prejudice change and identification would strengthen the claim of evaluative training as an effective method of prejudice reduction.

I like, therefore I am: Increasing associations between the self and Blacks with evaluative training

An individual's identification, or self-association, with a group impacts how that individual views and interacts with group members and nonmembers. If an individual associates a group with the self, it is generally a good thing, —for members of that group or in-group. Individuals are prone to give inflated positive evaluations of in-group members, to trust in-group members, and to cooperate with in-group members (Ando, 1999; Hewstone, Rubin, & Willis, 2002; Jackson, 2002). Unfortunately, individuals are also less likely to forgive non-in-group or out-group members and are more likely to have bias and prejudice against outgroup members (Voci, Hewstone, Swart, & Veneziani, 2015).

This disparity in an individual's treatment of in-group and out-group members extends to racial groups. The extent to which an individual associates the self with a racial group impacts his or her views and interactions with racial in-group members and racial out-group members. For example, Kenworthy, Barden, Diamond, and del Carmen (2011) found that White participants who identified strongly with the Caucasian race had higher false danger alarm rates for images of Black individuals while making a decision to shoot than White participants who had not identified strongly with the Caucasian race did. In particular, participants in this study completed a version of the Shooter task in which participants were presented with images of a White or Black individual holding either a gun, a soda can, or a cell phone and then instructed to press either a "shoot" or "don't shoot" button. Compared to White participants who had not identified strongly with their race, White participants who identified strongly with their race were more likely to press "shoot" for any image of a Black individual, including those images of a Black individual holding a soda can or cell phone.

As strongly associating with one's racial group with the self may have negative consequences, inducing a new or strengthening self-associations with a racial out-group group may have positive consequences. Therefore, it is important for researchers to develop methods of inducing self-association with a target group. The Unified Theory of Implicit Social Cognition (UT; Greenwald et al., 2002) is especially relevant to developing methods of inducing self-association. In particular, UT states that two initially unrelated concepts may become connected by mutual association with a third concept that acts as a link. The balance-congruity principle of the UT further states that when two previously unconnected or weakly connected concepts share an association with a third concept, the association between the first two concepts is strengthened. If the concept of self and the concept of Blacks are both associated with a third concept, then the concept of self and the concept of Blacks will consequently be more strongly associated.

This third connecting concept between the concept of self and the concept of Blacks could be positive valence. The self is generally of positive valence and therefore connected to other positively valenced concepts (Greenwald et al., 2002). If the concept of Blacks becomes positively valenced, then the concept of Blacks and the concept of self will share a mutual association with positive valence. I propose that this link between the concept of Blacks and the concept of self via positive valence may be formed through evaluative training. During evaluative training, participants learn to associate positive or negative concepts with a target group (French et al., 2013; Olson & Fazio, 2006). I propose that positive evaluative training, by creating a link between the concept of Blacks and positive valence, creates the indirect link between the concept of Blacks and the concept of self. The concept of self is already connected to positive valence, the concept of Blacks becomes connected to positive valence, and therefore

the concepts of self and Blacks are indirectly linked by positive valence according to the balance-congruity principle of UT. Evaluative training may thus serve dual purposes as a method of reducing implicit prejudice against a target group and a method of inducing self-association with the same target group.

Indeed, self-associations with a target group have a variety of positive effects on an individual's views toward the target group. Phills and colleagues demonstrated that non-Black individuals who associate the self with Blacks have reduced implicit prejudice toward Blacks (Phills, Kawakami, Tabi, Nadolny, & Inzlicht, 2011). After being trained to approach Blacks, the extent to which non-Black participants associated the self with Blacks increased, and increased self-associations with Blacks mediated approach training's effect on implicit prejudice toward Blacks. Two other studies provide additional support for the link between self-associations with a group and lower implicit prejudice toward that group. Todd and Burgmer (2013) found that self-associations with Turks mediated the relationship between perspective-taking and implicit prejudice toward Turks. Additionally, Woodcock and Monteith (2013) demonstrated that associating Blacks with "my group" rather than the "other group" led to reduced implicit prejudice toward Blacks among participants.

In addition to reduced implicit prejudice, self-association with Blacks has been linked to perceptions of discrimination against Blacks and Black-related political policies (Craemer, 2008; Craemer, 2009; Craemer, Shaw, Edwards, & Jefferson, 2013; Todd, Bodenhausen, & Galinsky, 2012). For example, Todd and colleagues (2012) found that self-associations with Blacks mediated perspective-taking's effect on increased perceptions of racial discrimination. Similarly, non-Black individuals who had greater self-other overlap or closeness to Blacks were more likely to support pro-Black policies such as reparations for slavery (Craemer, 2009), affirmative

action, and government aid to improve Blacks' socioeconomic status (Craemer, 2008), and were more likely to express intentions to vote for Barack Obama (Craemer et al., 2013).

There is strong evidence that increasing self-associations with a target group has important positive effects on an individual's views toward the target group. In this study, I attempted to increase self-associations with Blacks through an evaluative training task that instructed participants to associate positive concepts with Blacks. Additionally, I tested the following potential moderators of increasing self-associations: need for affiliation (NFA; Hill, 1987), self-monitoring (SM; Lennox & Wolfe, 1984), perspective-taking (PT; Davis, 1980), contingent self-worth (CSW; Crocker, Luhtanen, Cooper, & Bouvrette, 2003), self-concept clarity (SCC; Campbell et al., 1996), and sense of self (SS; Flury & Ickes, 2007).

High need for affiliation, high self-monitoring, high perspective-taking, and high contingent self-worth may facilitate self-association with a group and therefore affect evaluative training's impact on the implicit associations of participants. Individuals with high need for affiliation, or desire to belong, may easily associate the self with a group because one of their central motivations is to belong or associate with others. Individuals who are high self-monitors, or who are motivated by self-presentation, may easily associate the self with a group that is highly positive (as a target group becomes with positive evaluative training) because high self-monitors desire to present themselves in the best light. Individuals high in perspective-taking, or a tendency to take others' perspectives, may easily associate the self with a group because they find it easy to adopt another's perspective and may subsequently find it easy to associate the self with others. Individuals with high contingent self-worth, or self-esteem based on external cues, may easily associate the self with a group that is highly positive (as a target group becomes with

positive evaluative training) because their self-worth is based on external cues such as group membership and status.

Low self-concept clarity and weak sense of self may also facilitate self-association with a group and affect evaluative training's impact. Individuals with low self-concept clarity, or with undefined, inconsistent, and unstable self-beliefs, may easily associate the self with a group because they do not have strong self-beliefs that establish stable, inalterable group memberships. Individuals with a weak sense of self, or with an undefined and unstable identity/personality, may easily associate the self with a group because they likewise do not have stable, inalterable group memberships due to their lack of strong self-beliefs.

Taking this into account, my hypotheses were the following:

H I: Participants who learn to associate positive concepts with Blacks will have lower implicit prejudice than participants who learn to associate negative concepts with Blacks.

H II: Participants who learn to associate positive concepts with Blacks will have stronger self-association with Blacks than participants who learn to associate negative concepts with Blacks.

H III: The impact of learning to associate positive concepts with Blacks on self-association with Blacks will be mediated by implicit prejudice.

H IV: The impact of learning to associate positive concepts with Blacks on self-association with Blacks may be moderated by NFA, SM, PT, CSW, SCC, and/or SS.

Method

Participants and Design

Two hundred and eighty non-Black participants completed this experiment, but 41 participants were excluded from data analyses for not completing both IATs in a single session

or for making more than 40% errors during those tasks. Remaining participants were 139 females and 100 males with a mean age of 41.44 (*SD* = 12.27). Participants signed up for the study on Amazon's Mechanical Turk (mTurk), an online participant recruitment website. Any "mTurker" eighteen or older, that lived in the U.S., and had a 95% or higher approval rating was eligible to participate. Participants were randomly assigned to one of two conditions (Black-Positive evaluative training or Black-Negative evaluative training) in a between-subjects design. The first thirty-seven participants were paid $1.00 for their participation. To increase participation, the rate was increased to $2.00.

Procedure

At their leisure, participants completed the study on their personal computers in participants' chosen environments. Before beginning any experimental tasks, participants read a brief description of the study and gave informed consent electronically.

Potential Moderators Measurements. For their initial tasks, participants completed a series of scales measuring the following individual differences: contingent self-worth, need for affiliation, perspective-taking, self-concept clarity, self-monitoring, and sense of self.

First, participants responded to the thirty-five items of Crocker et al.'s Contingent Self-Worth (CSW) Scale on a seven-point scale: 1 = "*Strongly disagree*"; 2 = "*Disagree*"; 3 = "*Disagree somewhat*"; 4 = "*Neutral*"; 5 = "*Agree somewhat*"; 6 = "*Agree*"; 7 = "*Strongly agree*" (Crocker, Luhtanen, Cooper, & Bouvrette, 2002). These thirty-five items made up Crocker et al.'s CSW Scale's seven subscales: (1) Others' approval: "I can't respect myself if others don't respect me." (2) Appearance: "My sense of self-worth suffers whenever I think I don't look good." (3) Competition: "Knowing that I am better than others on a task raises my self-esteem." (4) Academic competence: "I feel better about myself when I know I'm doing well

academically." (5) Family support: "When my family members are proud of me, my sense of self-worth increases." (6) Virtue: "My self-esteem depends on whether or not I follow my moral/ethical principles." (7) God's love: "My self-esteem goes up when I feel that God loves me."

Second, participants responded to the twenty-six items of Hill's Need for Affiliation (NFA) Scale on a five-point scale: 1 = "*Not at all true*"; 2 = "*Slightly true*"; 3 = "*Somewhat true*"; 4 = "*Mostly true*"; 5 = "*Completely true*" (Hill, 1987). These twenty-six items made up Hill's NFA Scale's four subscales: (1) Emotional support: "It seems like whenever something bad or disturbing happens to me I often just want to be with a close, reliable friend." (2) Attention: "I often have a strong desire to get people around to notice me and appreciate what I am like." (3) Positive stimulation: "I think being close to others, listening to them, and relating to them on a one-to-one level is one of my favorite and most satisfying pastimes." (4) Social comparison: "If I am uncertain about what is expected of me, such as on a task or in a social situation, I usually like to be able to look to certain others for cues."

Third, participants responded to the nine items of Davis's Perspective-Taking Scale on a five-point scale: 0 = "*Does not describe me well*"; 4 = "*Describes me very well*" (Davis, 1980). An example item from this scale is "When I'm upset at someone, I usually try to "put myself in his shoes" for a while." Fourth, participants responded to the twelve items of Campbell et al.'s Self-Concept Clarity Scale on a five-point scale: 1 = "*Strongly disagree*"; 5 = "*Strongly agree*" (Campbell, Trapnell, Heine, Katz, Lavallee, & Lehman, 1996). An example item from this scale is "I spend a lot of time wondering about what kind of person I really am*." Fifth, participants subsequently responded to the thirteen items of Lennox and Wolfe's Self-Monitoring Scale on a six-point scale: 0 = "*Certainly, always false*"; 1 = "*Generally false*"; 2 = "*Somewhat false, but*

with exception"; 3 = "*Somewhat true, but with exception*"; 4 = "*Generally true*"; 5 = "*Certainly, always true*" (Lennox & Wolfe, 1984). An example item from this scale is "Different situations can make me behave like very different people." For the sixth and last individual difference measure, participants responded to the twelve items of Flury and Ickes's Sense of Self Scale on a four-point scale: 1 = "*Very uncharacteristic of me*"; 4 = "*Very characteristic of me*" (Flury & Ickes, 2007). An example item from this scale is "Other people's thoughts and feelings seem to carry greater weight than my own."

Evaluative Training Task. Although the task's true purpose was to train participants to associate positive or negative concepts with Blacks, participants were informed that the following task was designed to "investigate various theories of cognitive processes." Participants completed six blocks of 80 trials for a total of 480 trials. Photographs of twenty-four faces of Black men and twenty-four faces of White men were randomly presented in each block along with 20 positive and 20 negative words.

Participants were instructed that they would view individual photographs of Black and White faces and must select either the word below the photograph's bottom left corner or the word below the photograph's bottom right corner. One word was positive (e.g., lucky, miracle, happy) and one was negative (e.g., death, pollute, poison). Word position on the right or left was randomized from trial to trial. In the Positive-Black evaluative training task, participants were instructed to select the positive word if presented with a photograph of a Black face and the negative word if presented with a photograph of a White face. In the Negative-Black evaluative training task, participants were instructed to select the negative word if presented with a photograph of a Black face and the positive word if presented with a photograph of a White face. Participants were instructed to work quickly and accurately.

Participants viewed the photograph and two words until they responded. Participants used the 'E' and 'I' keys to select either the word below the photograph's bottom left or the word below the photograph's bottom right corner. If participants responded correctly, participants viewed a blank screen for 1000 ms before moving on to the next trial. If participants responded incorrectly, participants viewed a blank screen for 100 ms, then a red "X" in the screen's center for 800 ms, next a blank screen for 100 ms, and then moved on to the next trial. After each block, participants were given a break and instructed to press the space bar when they were ready to resume the task.

Self-Black Associations IAT. Order of this IAT and the Race IAT was counterbalanced. For the Self-Black Associations IAT, participants were told that the following task is a simple "quick responses" task. The task's true purpose was to measure self-association with Blacks.

Participants completed three practice blocks in addition to two critical blocks. All blocks consisted of sixty trials. Photographs of three Black men, three Black women, three White men, and three White women were randomly presented in each block. None of the photographs were from the evaluative conditioning task. Four self-related words (i.e., I, me, mine, self) and four other-related words (i.e., they, them, theirs, others) were also presented.

Participants were instructed that they would categorize photographs of Black and White faces and words related to the self and others (i.e., I, me, mine, self, they, them, theirs, other). In one critical block, participants used a key to categorize self-related words and photographs of Black people and a different key to categorize other-related words and photographs of White people. In the second critical block, participants used a key to categorize other-related words and photographs of Black people and a different key to categorize self-related words and photographs of White people. Participants were able to view the photograph and word stimuli

until they responded. If participants responded correctly, participants viewed a blank screen for 1000 ms before moving on to the next trial. If participants responded incorrectly, participants viewed a blank screen for 100 ms, then a red "X" in the screen's center for 800 ms, next a blank screen for 100 ms, and then move on to the next trial. After each block, participants were given a break and instructed to press the space bar when they were ready to resume the task.

Race IAT. Participants were instructed that they would categorize photographs of White and Black faces and positive or negative words (i.e., love, cheer, rainbow, peace, caress, and happy; evil, pain, grief, vomit, hate, and filth). Participants completed three practice blocks and two critical blocks of 72 trials each. In one critical block, participants used a key to categorize positive words and photographs of White faces and a different key to categorize negative words and photographs of Blacks. In the other critical block, participants used a key to categorize positive words and photographs of Black faces and a different key to categorize negative words and photographs of White faces.

When participants made a correct response, they viewed a blank screen for 1000 ms before beginning the subsequent trial. When participants made an incorrect response, they viewed a blank screen for 100 ms, then a red X in the center of the screen for 800 ms, and a blank screen for 100ms before beginning the subsequent trial.

Demographics and Funnel Debriefing Questions. Participants completed demographic items concerning their age, sex, race, residence years in the USA, and years speaking English. Then, participants completed funnel debriefing items that assessed their knowledge of the IAT and personal guesses about the study's purpose and experimenter hypotheses. At the conclusion of the experiment, participants received debriefing information and a secret code to enter on MTurk to earn payment for their participation.

Results

IAT Scoring. Consistent with the calculation methods of previous researchers (Greenwald et al., 2003), IAT D scores were generated such that for the Attitude IAT higher scores indicated greater implicit prejudice and for the Identification IAT higher scores indicated stronger associations between the self and Blacks.

Hypothesis I. An independent-samples t-test was used to analyze differences in attitudes toward Blacks. There was a significant difference in attitudes toward Blacks between the two groups, M_{diff} = .12, t (237) = 2.29, p = 0.023, d = 0.30, 95% CI [.05, .56]. Participants who received positive training were faster at categorizing positive concepts and Blacks (D = 0.16, SD = 0.38) than participants who received negative training (D = 0.28, SD = 0.41; see Figure 1).

Hypothesis II. Another independent-samples t-test demonstrated that there was not a significant difference in identification with Blacks between the two evaluative training groups (M_{diff} = .06, t (237) = 1.26, p = 0.208, d = 0.16, CI [-.09, .42]). Participants who received positive training (D = -0.12, SD = 0.37) and participants who received negative training (D = -0.18, SD = 0.36) did not significantly differ in speed of categorizing self words and Blacks (see Figure 2).

Hypothesis III. I used Hayes' (2013) PROCESS Model 4 syntax to run a mediation analysis. Attitudes toward Blacks were regressed on the type of trainig (0 = Black Negative; 1 = Black Positive). Training significantly predicted attitudes toward Blacks; those participants trained to associate positive concepts with Blacks demonstrated lower implicit prejudice toward Blacks when compared to those participants trained to associate negative concepts with Blacks (b = -.12, 95% CI [-.22, -.02], p = .023). Next, self-associations with Blacks were regressed on type of training and attitudes toward Blacks. Again, evaluative training did not significantly predict self-association with Blacks (b = .03, 95% CI [-.06, .12], p > .250), however, attitudes

toward Blacks significantly predicted self-association with Blacks (b = -.24, 95% CI [-.35, -.12], p < .001). For this indirect effect, I used 5,000 bootstraping resamples and got a 95% confidence interval of [.01, .06]. Since this interval does not include zero, this indicates that evaluative training's indirect effect on self-associations through attitudes is significant (see Figure 3).

Hypothesis IV. I used Hayes' (2013) PROCESS Model 1 syntax to test the effects of potential moderators. NFA, SM, PT, CSW, SCC, and SS did not significantly moderate the effect of training on attitudes (ps = 0.910, 0.617, 0.394, 0.978, 0.146, 0.147). Also, NFA, SM, PT, CSW, SCC, and SS did not significantly moderate the effect of training on identification (ps = 0.137, 0.166, 0.941, 0.257, 0.097, 0.380).

Discussion

Two of my four hypotheses were supported by my findings. First, hypothesis I, that participants who learn to associate positive concepts with Blacks will have lower implicit prejudice than participants who learn to associate negative concepts with Blacks, was supported. However, hypothesis II, that participants who learn to associate positive concepts with Blacks will have stronger self-association with Blacks than participants who learn to associate negative concepts with Blacks, was not supported. Hypothesis III, that the impact of learning to associate positive concepts with Blacks on self-association with Blacks will be mediated by implicit prejudice, was supported. Hypothesis IV, that the impact of learning to associate positive concepts with Blacks on self-association with Blacks may be moderated by NFA, SM, PT, CSW, SCC, and/or SS, was not supported, indicating that evaluative training's effects on implicit identification are robust.

These results hold implications for both applications of evaluative training and basic theorizing on the relations between attitudes and identification. Results demonstrate that it is

possible to alter self-association and implicit prejudice through a single method, evaluative training. Support for evaluative training as an implicit prejudice reduction and self-associations strengthening method is further bolstered when considering the strengths of this study, which include the benefits of the statistical power of a large sample size and the immunity to self-presentation of implicit measures. Results hold the implication that evaluative training may effectively and efficiently serve dual purposes of both reducing implicit prejudice against a target group and increasing self-associations with the same target group.

Additionally, results demonstrate a significant relationship between self-associations and implicit prejudice. My results coincide with previous researchers' findings that self-associations and implicit prejudice are connected, however, the direction of the relationship between self-association and implicit prejudice differs in my results. Previous researchers have found that self-association predicts reduced implicit prejudice (Phills et al., 2011; Todd & Burgmer, 2013). I have found that reduced implicit prejudice predicts self-association. It is notable that Phills and colleagues (2011) tested this alternative direction to the relationship between reduced implicit prejudice and self-association and, although it was nonsignificant, their confidence interval approached excluding zero. Together with my results, this provides support that the relationship between self-association and implicit prejudice may be bidirectional. Any concept that becomes connected to the concept of the self is consequently connected to positive valence and any concept that becomes connected to positive valence is consequently connected to the concept of the self, which fits in nicely with the self-positive valence assumption and the balance-congruity principle of UT.

Because this research examines a relatively novel process, there are several directions future research may take. First, future research may test the separation of tasks across sessions

(e.g., evaluative training in session one, implicit prejudice and self-association IATs in session two) and test the endurance of evaluative training's effects across time (i.e., a longitudinal study). In my study, participants completed all study tasks during a single session. Although the counterbalancing of tasks addresses the possible issue of practice or order effects, testing the separation of tasks across sessions may further discount practice or order effects. Testing the endurance of evaluative training's effects across time may provide support for evaluative training as a long-lasting implicit prejudice reduction and self-association induction method.

Second, future research may test evaluative training's effects on individuals' attitudes toward and self-association with different groups. In my study, evaluative training's effects were tested on non-Blacks' attitudes toward and self-association with Blacks. To provide support for the widespread applicability of evaluative training, it may be fruitful to test evaluative training's effect on non-Hispanics' attitudes toward and self-association with Hispanics.

Third, future research may test evaluative training's effects on various assessments of self-association. In my study, I measured self-association via the IAT. If it is demonstrated that evaluative training impacts self-association on other measures as well (e.g., AMP, GNAT), this provides further support for evaluative training's effectiveness as a method of inducing self-association.

Fourth and finally, future research should examine the impact of evaluative training on behavior. Self-associations with a certain group has been linked to positive behaviors toward members of that group associated negative behaviors toward nonmembers of that group (Ando, 1999; Hewstone et al., 2002; Jackson, 2002; Voci et al., 2015). Evaluative training, because it induces self-association with a group, may decrease negative behaviors and increase positive behaviors toward members of a previously non-self-associated group. If evaluative training is

demonstrated to positively impact interracial behavior, this will hold the implication that interracial conflict may be partially ameliorated through the effects of evaluative training.

Because evaluative training impacts both implicit prejudice and self-association, two key constructs that influence perceptions of and interactions with others, it is imperative to continue testing evaluative training. Evaluative training should be tested across time, different groups, and different implicit prejudice and self-association assessments. Most importantly, evaluative training's impact on behavior should be tested because evaluative training has the potential to improve an individual's behavior toward those he or she viewed as 'other' or out-group members. My findings and a strong theoretical foundation from UT provide early support for evaluative training as a method of reducing implicit prejudice and inducing self-association. It is likely that future testing will only continue to provide support for evaluative training's effectiveness.

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Figures

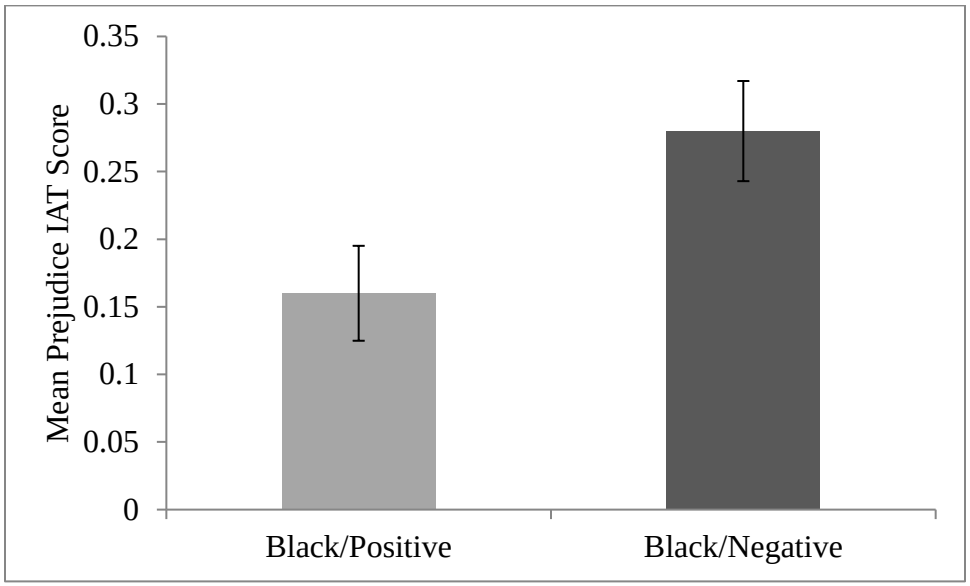

Figure 1. Impact of type of training on implicit prejudice against Blacks. This figure illustrates the difference in implicit prejudice between those participants who were trained to associate positive concepts with Blacks and those participants who were trained to associate negative concepts with Blacks.

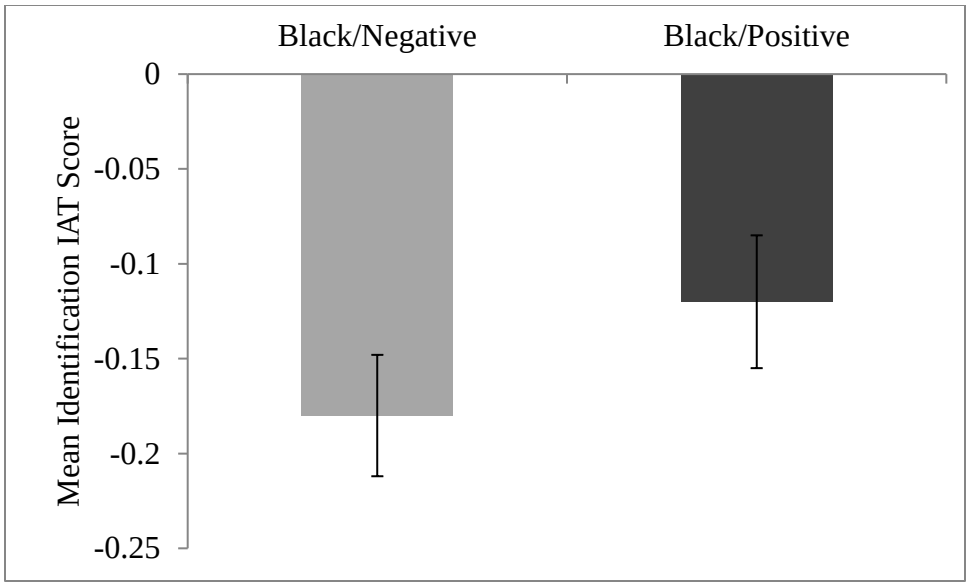

Figure 2. Nonsignificant impact of type of training on self-association/identification with Blacks. This figure illustrates the nonsignificant difference in self-association/identification between those participants who were trained to associate positive concepts with Blacks and those participants who were trained to associate negative concepts with Blacks.

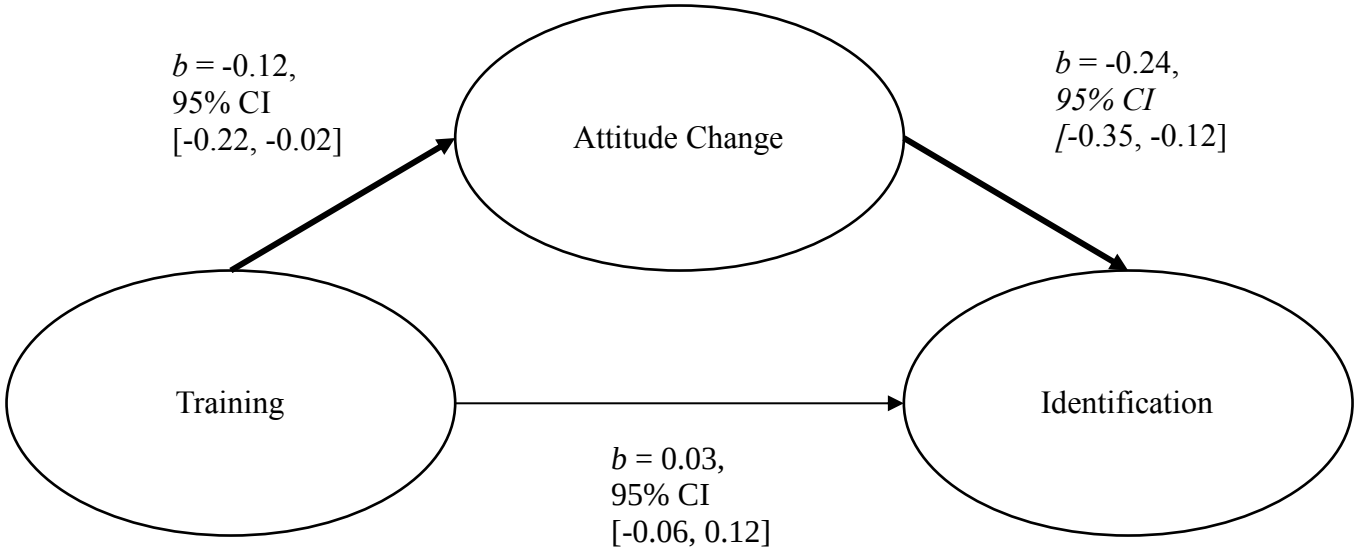

Figure 3. Identification via evaluative training model. This figure illustrates the relationship between evaluative training, attitude change, and identification.

Vita

Danielle Krusemark received a Bachelor's of Science in Psychology at the University of North Florida. While working toward her Bachelor's, Danielle assisted research on LGBT issues, mere thought, and eye-tracking in addition to evaluative training. In Fall 2016, Danielle will begin her study for a doctorate in social psychology at Florida State University.